

Statement on ASA Call to Boycott Israeli Academic Institutions

Middlebury President Ron Liebowitz sent the following message in an email to faculty and staff on Tuesday, Dec. 24, 2013:

Dear Faculty and Staff Colleagues,

Last week the American Studies Association (ASA) announced that a majority of its members voted in favor of a resolution calling for an academic boycott of Israeli academic institutions. Middlebury College unequivocally opposes that resolution. In supporting the boycott, the ASA is attacking the fundamental principles of academic freedom and association that all colleges and universities should hold dear. In addition, the singling out of Israel for this action is astounding given the rationale for the resolution.

While the vote is a sad reflection of an extreme and hateful ideology of some members of the academy, it is important to note that the Executive Committee of the Association of American Universities quickly condemned the ASA's resolution, along with a number of colleges and universities. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) last week affirmed its longstanding opposition to academic boycotts by stating: "The American Association of University Professors is disappointed in the vote announced this morning by the membership of the American Studies Association (ASA) to endorse an academic boycott of Israel. While the AAUP takes no position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, we have opposed all academic boycotts in principle since 2005...." I urge others in the academic community to condemn the ASA boycott and reaffirm their support for academic freedom.

Ron Liebowitz

Office of the President

Old Chapel
9 Old Chapel Road
Middlebury College
Middlebury, VT 05753
802.443.5400
president@middlebury.edu